

Alnwick Urban District Council

REPORT of the Medical Officer of Health Year 1956



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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

1956

To the Chairman and Members of the Alnwick Urban District Council

I have much pleasure in presenting my Annual Report for the year 1956.

There was a drop of 10 in the estimated population for 1956, and also a drop of 7 in the total live births. Nevertheless, there was a natural increase in population as the live births exceeded deaths by 37, so that this fall in the estimated population is not due to a falling birth rate, which is still above the National Average, 18.74 per 1,000 of the population, compared with the National Rate of 15.

The number of stillbirths also fell giving a rate of 21.42 against the National Rate of 23.2 per 1,000 total live and stillbirths.

The infant death rate rose a little to 21.89 per 1,000 live births, but is still below the National Rate of 24.9.

There was a decided increase in the number of deaths, and this was due, largely, to diseases of the heart and circulatory system, which went up from 26 in 1955 to 54 in 1956, and was 54% of all deaths. Cancer accounted for 13% of deaths compared with 16% of deaths in 1955. No death from lung cancer or tuberculosis was recorded.

Measles has a habit of appearing biennially, and this year was a quiet one as demonstrated by the low number of notifications received; only 2 of measles compared with 209 during the previous year. Acute poliomyelitis continues to occur spasmodically in the area, with no evidence to indicate source of infection.

The programme of vaccination against poliomyelitis was started in May 1956, and children born in November in each year 1947-54, plus those born in March in the years 1951-54 were eligible. There was some hesitancy on the part of parents, to take advantage of the offer, but a total of 41 children were vaccinated. Following the vaccination of those children there was an increased demand for registration, and many of the parents appeared to have been waiting to ascertain if any ill effects were produced by the vaccine. Complete absence of local or general re-action appeared to give the parents faith and confidence in the new vaccine.

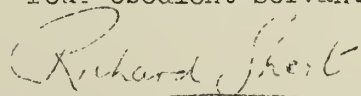
Tribute must be paid to the local Press for the help they gave me in publicising the Poliomyelitis Vaccination Campaign, and for keeping the public fully informed. My thanks must also go to the General Practitioners for their co-operation.

With the commencement of the new St. James' housing estate it was possible to make a start in slum clearance. The majority of the new houses had been built on the outskirts of the town, and as the Council decided to start building in towards the centre, measures were taken to deal with the bad property in the Green Batt area, and the area was scheduled for redevelopment. It was felt that it was a wise policy to concentrate on large areas which could be cleared, and not to deal with individual properties unless they necessitated urgent action.

Again I wish to thank the Chairman and Members of the Health and Water Committee for their interest and help throughout the year, and also the Clerk and Surveyor/Public Health Inspector for their kindness and co-operation.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,



Medical Officer of Health



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GENERAL STATISTICS

The area of the district is 4,778 acres.

The number of inhabited houses is 2406 and the number of new houses completed during the year was 17.

The rateable value is 781,614 and the sum represented by a penny rate is 3330.

The estimated mid-year population is 7310 and this figure is taken when calculating the Birth and Death Rate.

VITAL STATISTICS

<u>Live Births</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	80	52	132
Illegitimate	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>
Totals	<u>84</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>137</u>
Birth rate per 1,000 of the population	..	..	18.74

<u>Still Births</u>			
Legitimate	1	2	3
Illegitimate	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Totals	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total live and stillbirths			21.42

Death rate of Infants under One Year

All infants (per 1,000 live births)	21.89
Legitimate infants (per 1,000 leg. live births)	22.72
Illegitimate infants	NIL
Deaths from Measles	NIL
Deaths from Whooping Cough	NIL
Deaths from Diarrhoea	NIL

Deaths

<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
47	53	100
Death rate per 1,000 of the population		13.67
Deaths from Puerperal Sepsis		NIL
Deaths from Other Puerperal Causes		NIL
Deaths from Cancer		18

Table 1.

CHIEF CAUSES OF DEATH

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Tuberculosis (Respiratory)	-	-	-
Tuberculosis (Other)	-	-	-
Syphilitic Disease	1	1	2
Diphtheria	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	-	-	-
Meningococcal Infections	-	-	-
Acute Poliomyelitis	-	-	-
Measles	-	-	-
Other Infective and Parasitic Diseases	-	-	-
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	3	2	5
" " Lung, Bronchus	-	-	-
" " Breast	-	4	4
" " Uterus	-	-	-
Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms	6	3	9
Leukaemia, Aleukaemia	-	-	-
Diabetes	-	-	-
Vascular Lesions of the Nervous System	4	12	16
Coronary Disease, Angina	8	7	15
Hypertension with Heart Disease	-	-	-
Other Heart Disease	6	9	15
Other Circulatory Disease	3	5	8
Influenza	-	-	-
Pneumonia	1	1	2
Bronchitis	2	1	3
Other Diseases of Respiratory System	-	-	-
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	1	-	1
Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	-	-	-
Nephritis and Nephrosis	3	-	3
Hyperplasia of Prostate	1	-	1
Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion	-	-	-
Congenital Malformations	-	-	-
Other Defined and Ill-defined Diseases	3	5	8
Motor Vehicle Accidents	2	-	2
All Other Accidents	2	3	5
Suicide	1	-	1
Homicide and Operations of War	-	-	-
	<u>47</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 2.

INFANT MORTALITYDuring year ended 31st December, 1956.

<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Place of Death</u>
Broncho-pneumonia	3 days	Hillcrest Maternity Hospital, Alnwick.
Broncho-pneumonia	8 weeks	R.V.I. Newcastle.
Asphyxia due to suffocation, the result of inhalation of a regurgitated milky fluid.	3 months	Home.

Table 3.INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Scarlet Fever	-
Whooping Cough	2
Diphtheria	-
Measles	2
Pneumonia	-
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis	-
Acute Poliomyelitis	2
Dysentery	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	-
Smallpox	-
Paratyphoid Fever	-
Enteric Fever	-
Erysipelas	-
Food Poisoning	-

Table 4.TUBERCULOSIS

Respiratory	
Male 2	Aged 5½ and 44 years
Female 1	Aged 12 years

REPORT OF CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR1956NUMBER OF VISITS AND INSPECTIONS MADE DURING THE YEARFOOD AND DRUGS ACT 1955

Slaughterhouses	-	meat inspections	376	
Butcher's shops	-	" "	5	
Food premises	-	inspections (Food Hygiene Regs.)	77	
"	"	- food inspections	22	
Milk and Dairies Regulations 1949			11	
Market Stalls and Vehicles			<u>16</u>	507

HOUSING ACT 1936

Inspections	(	section 5	-	General)	17	
"	(	"	9	- Repairs)	11	
"	(	"	11	- Demolition Orders)	66	
"	(	"	12	- Closing Orders)	<u>11</u>	105

HOUSING ACT 1949

Inspections	(	section 4	-	Valuation for Advances)	20	
"	(	"	20	- Improvement Grants)	<u>8</u>	28

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT 1936

Drainage		53	
Dustbins		22	
Nuisances		14	
Verminous premises		13	
Defective water closets		8	
Tents, Vans and Sheds		<u>2</u>	119

FACTORIES ACT 1937 & 1948

Inspections	-	factories with mechanical power	17	
"	-	" " non-mechanical power	3	
"	-	building sites	<u>6</u>	26

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT 1949

Visits, surveys, treatments and administration	103
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WATER ACT 1945

Burst pipes, wastages etc.	6
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MISCELLANEOUS

Visits to butcher's shops re: condemnation certificates	32	
" " " re: lack of cleanliness of slaughterhouses	3	
Inspections during repairs to slaughterhouses	4	
" scrap metal yards	2	
Housing Investigations (Applicants for Council houses)	12	
Visit re: milk sampling	12	
" " water "	11	
" to Refuse Tip	7	
" " Sewage works	3	
" " Waterworks	7	
" " Auction Mart	4	
" " Public Conveniences	<u>11</u>	108

TOTAL NUMBER OF VISITS AND INSPECTIONS MADE

1002

NOTICES SERVED DURING YEAR

	Informal	Complied with	Statutory	Complied with	Executed in default by L.A.
<u>Public Health Act 1936</u>					
Sec. 75 - dustbins	4	2	2	2	-
" 39 - drainage	1	1	-	-	-
" 45 - W.C's.	1	-	1	-	1
" 93 - Nuisances	1	1	-	-	-
<u>Housing Act 1936</u>					
Sec. 9 - Repairs	4	4	-	-	-
<u>Prevention of damage by Pests Act 1949</u>					
Sec. 4 - Execution of works	1	-	1	1	-
T O T A L	12	8	4	3	1

WATER SUPPLY

The water supply was maintained throughout the year, without any real shortage, but only by pumping to full capacity on occasions. Increased industrial consumption necessitated more water being transferred from the High Supply reservoir to the Low Supply reservoir to meet the additional requirements on this service. This was done without serious detriment to the requirements of the High Service.

The Senna Wells Scheme was finally abandoned in favour of the Northumberland County Council Water Scheme whereby 350,000 gallons will be provided daily by the year 1961.

In view of future development, i.e. new schools, new housing estates, and the industrial area, it may be necessary to devise some scheme whereby more water can be made available until the County Scheme is operating.

Bacteriological samples were taken of the three main sources of supply, also private supplies to isolated dwellings on the Alnwick Moor. The results of two of the Low Supply samples, showed heavy counts of coliform bacilli. Both samples were taken on the same day, after several days of continuous heavy rainfall, and a further check showed that the chlorination plant was defective. All the remaining samples were satisfactory.

<u>SUMMARY OF WATER SAMPLES TAKEN DURING THE YEAR (BACTERIOLOGICAL)</u>				
	Satisfactory		Suspicious	Unsatisfactory
	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV
Alnwick High Supply	2	-	-	-
Alnwick Low Supply	-	3	-	2
Duke's Supply	-	1	-	-
Private Supplies	3	-	1	-
T O T A L	5	4	1	2

HOUSING

During the year work was commenced on the new St. James' Housing Estate, wherein 64 houses are to be built for the local authority under contract. These houses will comprise 22 three bedroom type, 34 two bedroom type and 8 Aged Persons Bungalows. The first block of houses will be ready for occupation early in the new year.

An inspection was carried out of the dwelling houses in the proposed Green Batt - Bondgate Redevelopment Area. After initial inspections it was decided to serve notice of "time and place" on each of the owners with a view to making individual demolition orders on the property. There are 39 houses in the area, 5 of which are unoccupied, and 39 families residing therein.

STATISTICS

	New Houses Completed During The Year	With State Assistance	Unaided	Total
(a)	By Local Authority	-	-	-
(b)	By any Housing Authority	10 *	-	10
(c)	By private persons	-	7	7

* Firemen's houses: built by Northumberland County Council.

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS: HOUSING ACT 1949

	No. of separate houses
Applications submitted to local authority during year	10
Applications rejected	1
Applications approved	9
Approximate average grant approved per house	£208
Total number of houses approved for grant since inception of scheme.	31

LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSES

Total number of houses owned by the local authority	924
Number of temporary dwellings included in the above (a) pre-fabs	50
Number of outstanding applications for Council houses on the authority's list at end of year	424

FOOD(i) Food premises in district

There are 123 food premises in the district, subject to the Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955, comprising the following trades:

Public Houses, hotels and social clubs	23	Chemists	4
General dealers	18	Fried fish and chips	4
Grocers	15	Ice cream manufacturers	2
Butchers	12	Egg packing stations	2
Fruiterers	9	Off-licensed establishments	2
Cafés and Snack bars	9	Breweries	1
School and club canteens	9	Fishmongers	1
Boarding houses, hospitals and nurseries	5	Poulterers	1
Bakers and confectioners	5	Mineral Water Manufacturers	1

(ii) Premises registered under Section 16 - Food and Drugs Act 1955

Sale of ice-cream	28
Ice-cream manufacture	2
Preserved food - (pie making)	2

N.B. 27 of the 28 registrations is for the sale of pre-wrapped ice-cream.

Milk and Dairies Regulations 1949 - 1954

Number of dairies registered	2
Total number of inspections of registered premises	10

(iii) Food Hygiene Regulations 1955

Immediately after these regulations came into operation a letter was sent to the occupier of every "food business" in the district, along with a booklet "Your Guide to the Food Hygiene Regulations 1955" and a poster "Food Hygiene - notice to persons engaged in the handling of food," with a request that the poster be displayed in a prominent position on the premises where it could be seen and read by all members of the staff. It was further stated that an inspection of the premises would be made in due course, but if any works were to be carried out immediately and there was any doubt as to whether such would satisfy the regulations it was suggested that the Public Health Inspector be contacted without delay.

It is rather distressing to note that not one occupier deemed it necessary to seek any advice on the new regulations. During the actual inspections however, it was found that the traders were at least making some effort to comply with the regulations.

It is regretted that time did not permit an inspection of every "food business" in the district during the year - 77 inspections actually being carried out. Where necessary letters were sent to occupiers drawing their attention to any contraventions or deficiencies of the regulations.

As in the past special attention was directed to cafés, snack bars, butchers' and bakers' establishments as the type of food sold is susceptible to food poisoning organisms.

There is no clean food guild in operation and the number of personnel in the "food businesses" are such that I am of the opinion that personal contact with food handlers, giving advice where necessary, whilst actually carrying out their work, is of more importance than giving lectures to classes on food hygiene.

(iv) Milk

The number of producer/retailers and distributors of milk in the district, and the designation of milk sold are as follows:-

Milk sold by:	No.	Designation of milk sold			
		T.T.	Undesig- nated	Pasteur- ised	Steril- ised
Producer/Retailers	2	-	2	-	-
Distributors	5	2	-	4	3
" (Supplementary Licence)	1	1	-	-	-
T O T A L	8	3	2	4	3

Results of Milk Samples (Bacteriological)

<u>Grade of milk</u>	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>
Tuberculin tested	5	3
Undesignated	2	1
Pasteurised	25 *	-
T.T. Pasteurised	15 *	

* 24 samples of pasteurised and 13 T.T. pasteurised taken by the County Health Inspector at the Alnwick Creamery.

Results of Milk Samples (Biological)

Undesignated	2)	B. Tuberculosis
Tuberculin tested	2)	not found.

(v) Slaughterhouses

The municipal-owned slaughterhouse is let on a fixed rental to all local butchers who require slaughtering facilities.

There are no private slaughterhouses in the district.

In the White Paper on slaughterhouse policy presented to Parliament, it was stated that minimum standards are to be prescribed for the construction, lay-out and equipment of slaughterhouses for the purpose of securing the handling and slaughtering of animals in a humane manner; hygiene conditions for the handling of carcasses and offal; adequate facilities for the efficient inspection of animals and meat; and satisfactory working conditions and welfare facilities for persons working in slaughterhouses.

Although legislation has not yet been made it is obvious that our slaughterhouse will fall far short of requirements, and cannot be brought up to modern standards.

On account of its siting and our future building programme there is an urgent need for a slaughterhouse to be built, preferably on the proposed industrial site.

Condemned carcase meat and offal is collected from the slaughterhouse by a Tyneside firm of by-products, where it is sterilised and converted into fertiliser and animal feeding stuffs. All condemned meat and offal is dyed green before collection.

25 licences were issued to slaughtermen during the year under the Slaughter of Animals Act 1933, and the Slaughter of Animals (Amendment) Act 1954.

Of the carcasses inspected throughout the year 185 were from emergency slaughtered animals.

CARCASSES AND OFFAL INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED IN WHOLE OR PART						
	Cattle excluding cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep & Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed	1704	180	268	4931	1466	Nil
Number inspected	1704	180	268	4931	1466	Nil
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci:</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	4	11	9	49	9	-
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	358	75	8	189	82	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci	21.01	47.77	6.34	4.83	6.21	-
<u>Tuberculosis only</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	3	3	-	-	-	-
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	81	20	-	-	39	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	4.93	18.33	-	-	2.66	-
<u>Cysticercosis</u>						
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	7	-	-	-	-	-
Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration	-	-	-	-	-	-
Generalised and totally condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-

(vi) Food Inspections (Other than Carcase meat)

22 visits were made to foodshops for the purpose of food inspection. The following were voluntarily surrendered and disposed of by controlled tipping at the refuse tip.

	Total weight	
	lbs.	ozs.
58 tins cooked meats	243	6
54 " vegetables	59	14
56 " fruit	56	12
19 " milk	17	12
5 " fish	1	13
4 jars fish paste	1	0
2 tins soup	1	10
100 stems bananas	3025	0
Total weight	<u>3407</u>	<u>3</u>

Total weight of food stuffs condemned: 1.5 tons.

With reference to the condemnation of the 100 stems of bananas, it was found that these had been exposed to severe frost in a railway siding and by the time they arrived at the warehouse of the wholesale fruiterer they were totally unfit for ripening. Only a small proportion of this consignment was actually salvaged.

REMOVAL OF REFUSE

Refuse continues to be collected weekly from all houses in the district other than a few isolated dwellings on Alnwick Moor. Two Bedford vehicles are employed.

The total number of traders contributing to the "trade refuse scheme" is 42 and a total sum of £52. 10s. was collected during the year.

All refuse is tipped at the East Cawledge Park site, using the controlled method of tipping.

No salvage is collected and all waste paper is burnt at the tip. No record is kept of weights of refuse collected.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT 1949

		Type of Property Non-Agricultural				5 Agri- cul- tural
		1 Local Authority	2 Dwelling Houses	3 All other (including Business Premises)	4 Total of Cols. 1, 2 & 3.	
1	Number of properties in district	7	2396	670	3073	14
11	Number of properties inspected as a result of:					
	a. notification	-	27	5	32	-
	b. survey under the Act	3	29	3	35	2
	c. Otherwise (e.g. when visited primarily for some other purpose)	-	13	62	75	-
111	Total inspections carried out. (including re-inspections)	10	71	74	155	2
1V	Number of properties inspected (in Sec. 11) which were found to be infested by:					
	a. Rats	2	36	6	45	1
	b. Mice	1	9	7	17	1
V	Number of infested properties (in Sec. 1V) treated by the L.A.	3	34	5	42	-
VI	Total treatments carried out, (including re-treatments)	6	42	5	53	-
VII	Number of notices served under Sec. 4 of the Act:					
	a. Treatment	-	-	-	-	-
	b. Structural Work (i.e. proofing)	-	1	-	-	-
VIII	Number of cases in which default action was taken following the issue of a notice under Sec. 4 of the Act.	-	-	-	-	-

The "twice yearly" treatment of sewers was carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. No new areas of infestation were found.

FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 AND 1948

PART 1 OF THE ACT

1. INSPECTIONS for purpose of provisions as to health

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Secs. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6, are to be enforced by the Local Authority	8	3	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Sec. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	45	17	-	-
(iii) Other premises in which Sec. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-worker's premises)	3	6	-	-
T O T A L	56	26	-	-

2. CASES in which defects were found

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspec- tor	By H.M. Inspec- tor	
Want of cleanliness (S 1)	1	1	-	-	-
Overcrowding (S 2)	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature (S 3)	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation (S 4)	1	1	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors (S 6)	1	1	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences (S 7)					
a. Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-
b. Unsuitable or defective	3	2	-	-	-
c. Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	1	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to out-work)	-	-	-	-	-
T O T A L	6	5	-	1	-

